Yemen Villagers Talk Of Links to Namers

AL MATAWIR, Yemen (AP) —This rural village in a remote mountain region of northern Yemen is where Ahmed Rageh Namer was born.

Namer, 43, and his sons, Hussein, 20, and Abdo, 18, are under arrest in New York, charged with plotting the assassination of President-elect Richard M. Nixon.

Of its 109 natives, 19 villagers are in the United States. Al Matawir is a poor village, but it is the envy of the other villages around, for it is rich by their standards.

The reason is the money sent home by the Namers and the others who left to earn a living in the United States.

"We are a cooperative society," said one old villager. "The immigrants send money home to relatives who need it, regardless of the relationship. When another goes he pays that honorary loan.

"Only women, children and old men live here. Young men capable of work should emigrate to America and earn money to rebuild the houses."

Said a sister of Namer: "We love America. Because of America we get money, clothes and gold, and life becomes easier."

The sister, like the rest of the Namer family, believe the three are innocent.

Mrs. Namer told reporters she had asked for guns — "a gun is an identity in Yemen" — and letters she wrote her husband will prove it.

A rifle and a carbine were found in the New York apartment where the Namers lived. Mrs. Namer said both Namer and Abdo wrote that a gun was being sent.

"Ahmed could never do a thing against anybody," Mrs. Namer said, and a cousin described Namer as "good, kind and merciful."

This cousin, Hizam Najy Namer, 43, said, however, Namer was a secret policeman in the former British protectorate of Aden, now South Yemen, before he went to the United States.

"Maybe this is God's revenge for sending an innocent person to jail while he was in the secret police in Aden before he emigrated to the United States," he said.

Zeinab Ahmed Namer, 12-year-old daughter of Ahmed Namer, asked with tears in her eyes: "Will they kill my father?"

Zeinab has never seen her father. He left before she was born.

Another daughter, Dawlah, 25, said: "We need him. We want him alive. We don't care for money. We will sell our clothes and house and everything. We want him to return."